

# CRITHALYS

*CRITIQUE, THÉORISATION, ANALYSE DE LA LITTÉRATURE,  
DES ARTS ET DE LA SOCIÉTÉ CONTEMPORAINE*

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# CRITHALYS

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## LIGNE ÉDITORIALE



Les enjeux des études actuelles en langue, littérature, art et sciences sociales exigent de faire correspondre les théories et d'engager les experts et critiques à de nouvelles perspectives de lecture. L'idée est d'ouvrir la compréhension des œuvres et des pratiques dans leurs multiples rapports à l'histoire, à l'expérimentation, à la création artistique, aux convergences idéologiques et scripturaires. Saisi sous ce prisme, les défis du développement donnent forme et force à un flux pluridisciplinaire de regards innovants qui travaillent à transformer les sociétés et à penser les humanités selon les perspectives du durable et de la qualité de vie.

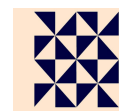
**La Revue CRITHALYS** qui procède des activités du Groupe de Recherche en Critiques et Théories Littéraires Contemporaines (GRECTLIC) de l'UFR Langues et Littérature (Université Alassane Ouattara) s'appuie sur l'expérience et les savoirs autour de la critique et des interactions théoriques pour faire de la production scientifique un levier développementaliste. Revue pluridisciplinaire, **CRITHALYS** veut penser le potentiel théorique et pratique pour l'inscrire dans le jeu de composition, d'expérimentation des œuvres et des réalités sociales pour garantir la meilleure marge possible à leur réception critique. Elle fait bon accueil des propositions originales sous les aménagements de thématiques actuelles et de pointe que la critique universitaire inscrit aux besoins du développement. Les articles subiront la rigueur d'un processus d'évaluation avant publication ; une fois publiés, lesdits articles seront exploitables en *Open Access*.

Ainsi, l'interaction critique assignera à des perspectives qui enrôleront des spéculations constructives. Ces réflexions croisées seront déterminantes pour le dynamisme de la revue, en particulier la maîtrise des objets, l'élaboration de méthodes bien définies, l'évaluation nodale et la visibilité des résultats.

**La Revue CRITHALYS** a pour dessein de libérer tout le potentiel des chercheurs qui partagent la volonté de s'approprier la maîtrise des savoirs et leur divulgation.

Prof. KANGA Konan Arsène  
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## CONSIGNES DE RÉDACTION

Normes éditoriales d'une revue de lettres ou sciences humaines adoptées par le CTS/LSH, le 17 juillet 2016 à Bamako, lors de la 38ème session des CCI : « Aucune revue ne peut publier un article dont la rédaction n'est pas conforme aux normes éditoriales (NORCAMES/LSH). Les normes typographiques, quant à elles, sont fixées par chaque revue. »

### 1. Les textes à soumettre devront respecter les conditions de formes suivantes :

- ✓ le texte doit être transmis au format document doc ou rtf ;
- ✓ il devra comprendre un maximum de 60.000 signes (espaces compris), interligne 1,5 avec une police de caractères Times New Roman 12 ;
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- ✓ les figures et les tableaux doivent être intégrés au texte et présentés avec des marges d'au moins six centimètres à droite et à gauche. Les caractères dans ces figures et tableaux doivent aussi être en Times 12. Figures et tableaux doivent avoir un titre.
- ✓ Les citations dans le corps du texte doivent être indiquées par un retrait avec tabulation 1 cm et le texte mis en taille 11.

### 2. Des normes éditoriales d'une revue de lettres ou sciences humaines

**2.1.** Aucune revue ne peut publier un article dont la rédaction n'est pas conforme aux normes éditoriales (NORCAMES). Les normes typographiques, quant à elles, sont fixées par chaque revue.

**2.2.** La structure d'un article, doit être conforme aux règles de rédaction scientifique, selon que l'article est une contribution théorique ou résulte d'une recherche de terrain.

**2.3.** La structure d'un article scientifique en lettres et sciences humaines se présente comme suit:

- Pour un article qui est une contribution théorique et fondamentale : Titre, Prénom et Nom de l'auteur, Institution d'attache, adresse électronique, Résumé en Français, Mots clés, Abstract, Key words, Introduction (justification du thème, problématique, hypothèses/objectifs scientifiques, approche), Développement articulé, Conclusion, Bibliographie.

- Pour un article qui résulte d'une recherche de terrain : Titre, Prénom et Nom de l'auteur, Institution d'attache, adresse électronique, Résumé en Français, Mots clés, Abstract, Key words, Introduction, Méthodologie, Résultats et Discussion, Conclusion, Bibliographie.

- Les articulations d'un article, à l'exception de l'introduction, de la conclusion, de la bibliographie, doivent être titrées, et numérotées par des chiffres (exemples : 1.; 1.1.; 1.2; 2.; 2.2. ; 2.2.1 ; 2.2.2.; 3. ; etc.).

**2.4.** Les passages cités sont présentés en romain et entre guillemets. Lorsque la phrase citant et la citation dépassent trois lignes, il faut aller à la ligne, pour présenter la citation (interligne 1) en romain et en retrait, en diminuant la taille de police d'un point.

**2.5.** Les références de citation sont intégrées au texte citant, selon les cas, de la façon suivante :

- (Initiale (s) du Prénom ou des Prénoms de l'auteur. Nom de l'Auteur, année de publication, pages citées) ; - Initiale (s) du Prénom ou des Prénoms de l'auteur. Nom de l'Auteur (année de publication, pages citées).

Exemples :



- En effet, le but poursuivi par M. Ascher (1998, p. 223), est « d'élargir l'histoire des mathématiques de telle sorte qu'elle acquière une perspective multiculturelle et globale (...), d'accroître le domaine des mathématiques : alors qu'elle s'est pour l'essentiel occupé du groupe professionnel occidental que l'on appelle les mathématiciens(...)».

- Pour dire plus amplement ce qu'est cette capacité de la société civile, qui dans son déploiement effectif, atteste qu'elle peut porter le développement et l'histoire, S. B. Diagne (1991, p. 2) écrit :

Qu'on ne s'y trompe pas : de toute manière, les populations ont toujours su opposer à la philosophie de l'encadrement et à son volontarisme leurs propres stratégies de contournements. Celles là, par exemple, sont lisibles dans le dynamisme, ou à tout le moins, dans la créativité dont sait preuve ce que l'on désigne sous le nom de secteur informel et à qui il faudra donner l'appellation positive d'économie populaire.

- Le philosophe ivoirien a raison, dans une certaine mesure, de lire, dans ce choc déstabilisateur, le processus du sous-développement. Ainsi qu'il le dit :

le processus du sous-développement résultant de ce choc est vécu concrètement par les populations concernées comme une crise globale : crise socio-économique (exploitation brutale, chômage permanent, exode accéléré et douloureux), mais aussi crise socio-culturelle et de civilisation traduisant une impréparation sociohistorique et une inadaptation des cultures et des comportements humains aux formes de vie imposées par les technologies étrangères. (S. Diakité, 1985, p. 105).

**2.6.** Les sources historiques, les références d'informations orales et les notes explicatives sont numérotées en série continue et présentées en bas de page.

**2.7.** Les divers éléments d'une référence bibliographique sont présentés comme suit : NOM et Prénom (s) de l'auteur, Année de publication, Zone titre, Lieu de publication, Zone Éditeur, pages (p.) occupées par l'article dans la revue ou l'ouvrage collectif. Dans la zone titre, le titre d'un article est présenté en romain et entre guillemets, celui d'un ouvrage, d'un mémoire ou d'une thèse, d'un rapport, d'une revue ou d'un journal est présenté en italique. Dans la zone Éditeur, on indique la Maison d'édition (pour un ouvrage), le Nom et le numéro/volume de la revue (pour un article). Au cas où un ouvrage est une traduction et/ou une réédition, il faut préciser après le titre le nom du traducteur et/ou l'édition (ex : 2<sup>nd</sup>e éd.).

**2.8.** Ne sont présentées dans les références bibliographiques que les références des documents cités. Les références bibliographiques sont présentées par ordre alphabétique des noms d'auteur. Par exemple :

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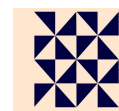
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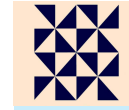
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## SYNTHÈSE DES ARTICLES

Ce deuxième numéro de la revue CRITHALYS se distingue par une argumentation notable du nombre d'articles ainsi que par la qualité des productions scientifiques. Les trois sections - Littérature, Communication et Langues - constituent autant d'espaces de réflexion qui permettent d'aborder diverses thématiques et de les confronter aux exigences du développement.

La section Littérature se structure autour d'un parcours allant des mythes, en passant par des analyses portant sur la syntaxe, la sémiotique et les héritages de la tradition orale. Dans cette perspective, le mythe de « la grande mission » inaugure la réflexion, afin de montrer que les contes, les mythes, les légendes, les épopées et les proverbes sont les incarnations de nouvelles approches éducatives, fondées sur un socle culturel solide et renforcées par de véritables prouesses intellectuelles et créatives. Un récit épique provenant du Ghana célèbre l'héroïne Nana Yaa Asantewaa et les valeurs traditionnelles africaines. Les voies nouvelles du roman africain actuel se tracent dans le prospectivisme, les identités plurielles et les nouvelles écritures décoloniales. Dans le rapport à la scène, la modélisation des danses fait l'objet d'un traitement sémiotique. Ici, l'écopoétique, l'auctorialité, le dogmatisme et la pragmatique sont au goût du jour pour traduire l'expressivité de l'esthétique de certains auteurs, romanciers et poètes occidentaux. Tous ces regards justifient les discours qui donnent force à la langue.

S'agissant de la section consacrée à la communication, un article met en évidence la contribution de la communication sociale aux politiques de sécurité, perçue comme un enjeu majeur du bien-être des ouvriers. L'étude vise à redynamiser les politiques sécuritaires par le biais de la Communication sociale, afin de préserver la santé et la sécurité des travailleurs et de promouvoir un environnement de travail sain et sécurisé.

Dans la section - Langues, les premiers contributeurs ont mené une réflexion sur l'ossature des articles scientifiques les décuplant en article de réflexion et article d'exploration. En sus, les autres questions évoquées sont afférentes aux conflits et aux guerres d'intérêt où résonnent des mots comme « *soldiers, weapons, conflicts resolution...* »





## Shell-shocked British soldiers: war policy, neurosis and recovery in Pat Barker's *The regeneration trilogy*

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### Abstract

This article is at the intersection of literature and medicine. It critically reads through Cathy Caruth's trauma and Freudian's dream work theories, the psychological effects of war on the shell-shocked British pensioners of Craiglockhart War Hospital being treated for mental breakdown and dissociated disorders during World War I. Pat Barker's fiction relies on the British neurologist, anthropologist and psychologist, William Halse Rivers' holistic approach of trauma in his skilled medical diagnosis to offer an effective curative treatment to his patients. By weaving the narrative accounts of the traumatic experiences of illness in wartime, a comprehensive understanding of the patients' stories of illness, observed through Freudian's Oedipus complex, is provided to readers to revisit and voice their undying memories. The present paper, then, inquiries in Pat Barker's *The Regeneration Trilogy*, the therapeutic approaches applied to patients to recover from loss of memory and regenerate war neuroses. At last, this paper, ethically, analyses in depth the British war politics as castigated by Siegfried Sassoon's Declaration taking up the cudgels against the political errors and insincerities of the British Government.

**Keywords:** War Neurosis, Narrative Trauma, Freud, Hypnosis, Ergotherapy, Poetry Therapy

### Résumé

Cet article est à la croisée de la littérature et de la médecine. Il analyse de manière critique, à la lumière des théories du traumatisme de Cathy Caruth et du rêve de Freud, les effets psychologiques de la guerre sur les pensionnaires Britanniques de l'hôpital de guerre de Craiglockhart, traumatisés par les bombardements, et traités de la dépression nerveuse et du trouble mental pendant la première guerre mondiale. L'œuvre fictionnelle de Pat Barker s'appuie sur l'approche holistique du traumatisme du neurologue, anthropologue et psychanalyste Britannique, William Halse Rivers, et sur son expertise diagnostic pour offrir un traitement curatif à ses patients. En tissant les récits des expériences traumatiques des maladies mentales en tant de guerre, une compréhension des histoires des vécus des patients, observé à travers le complexe d'œdipe, est offerte aux lecteurs pour revisiter et relater leurs souvenirs indélébiles. Le present article, investie donc dans le roman « Regeneration Trilogy » de Pat Barker, les approches thérapeutiques appliquées aux patients pour surmonter leurs pertes de la mémoire et régénérer leurs névroses de guerre. Enfin, cet article analyse aussi de façon éthique la politique de guerre Britannique telle que dénoncée par la déclaration de Siegfried Sassoon qui s'insurge contre les erreurs et l'hypocrisie du gouvernement Britanniques.

**Mots Clés :** Névrose de guerre, traumatisme narratif, Freud, hypnose, ergothérapie, poésie-thérapie.





## Introduction

The Great War, as it is known today, embroiled most of the central powers including France, The United States of America, Germany, Italia, Russia and Great Britain, was unprecedented in the abject psychological misery it inflicted on millions of people. The political leaders, in their obsessive and selfish desires, to win the war and/or defend their keen interests, conscripted a great number of callow young soldiers to actively take part in the war in the name of patriotism and honour. The armed struggles on the battlefields were as bloody as deadly, transforming the battlegrounds into mudscape of shell-splinters, corpses, casualties and horrors. These shell-shocked British soldiers fighting on the frontline and muddy trenches on the Western front were deeply marked for life by the traumatic experience of war they witnessed. In such a context, the prolonged exposure to mental breakdown and war neurosis led to a proliferation of trauma studies with “the initiation of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) to both areas psychiatry and psychoanalysis in 1980” (B. Sadjabi and Farnaz Esmkhani, 2016, p. 2). Traditionally used as a clinical concept, “trauma” gains a growing interest in the field of literature with the predominant works of literary theorists including Sigmund Freud’s *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1961) and Cathy Caruth’s *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History* (1996) on war neurosis and the process of remembering in the individuals’ psyches.

At the rise of trauma theory, several British poets of the Great War (frontline witnesses) including Siegfried Sassoon and Wilfred Owen, to name just a few, have extensively written on the grimly reality of war and its impact on survivors. The British novelist, Pat Barker, explores the traumatic effects of war on shell-shocked British pensioners of Craiglockhart War Hospital suffering from the haunting memories of the traumatic events on the Western front. In her historical and war novel, Barker portrays, in a first-person narrative, the pernicious legacy of World War I on the state of mind and identity of the involved soldiers. As a reaction to these psychosomatic outcome, she offers through the fictional army therapist of Craiglockhart War Hospital<sup>1</sup>, W.H.R.Rivers, and Dr Lewis Yealland, some efficacious therapeutic methods to foster the recovery of the loss of memory of their patients. Using Freudian DreamWorks theory, Rivers masterfully attempts to interpret his patients’ dreams in order to explain the repressed memories and, thereby, historicize their silenced memories. Meanwhile, Barker’s novel also questions the ethics of the British war politics as epitomized by the Sassoonian Declaration of

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<sup>1</sup>Also referred to as “Dottyville” in Sassoon’s letter of 1917, “Craiglockhart” is a renowned British neuropsychiatric war hospital set up to treat the epidemic of shell-shocked soldiers inflicted in the muddy trenches of the Great War (Thomas E F Webb, 2006: 342).





war in which he ironically criticizes the political leaders for deliberately prolonging the war for unjustified reasons.

Although such a traumatic events fully exist in Barker's fiction, my concern in this study lies beyond the mere embodiment of trauma. Rather, I am particularly interested, herein, in exploring the role of literature in narrating and voicing the unspeakable memories of the shell-shocked soldiers war experiences. More specifically, I portend to contribute to the debate on the role of war poetry in the healing process of trauma. War poetry, in this study, is effectively deployed as a literary trope that can effectively contribute to the healing process of the survivors of the First World War trauma.

The problematic that guides our reflection is raised in the following questions: is the continuity of the British war against Germans' troops ethically justified? How can narration and storytelling be constructed as a therapeutic device to facilitate the revival of the suppressed memories of war experience into the mind of Shell-shocked British soldiers? Or else, to what extent can creative artworks provide a positive response to the claims of trauma of war on soldiers? And what are the therapeutic methods applied in the treatment of the traumatized survivors?

### **1. Just or Unjust War: Sassoon's Poetic Protest of War**

Pat Barker's *The Regeneration Trilogy* critically places under the persistent fires of the trenches warfare, the moral principles governing the pursuit of war by the British government in the First World War from Michael Walzer's *Just War Theory* perspective. To Walzer, for a particular declaration of war to be justified, "a number of criteria need to be met – there should be a just cause, a wrong that must be righted, those who wage war should do so with right intention, war should only be declared by a proper public authority, as a last resort, the violence employed should be proportional to the offence, the innocent should be protected, and there should be a reasonable prospect that violence would make things better rather than worse" (C. Brown and Michael Walzer, 2017, p. 4).

In the spirit of Walzer's *ius in bello*, Sassoon's anti-war Declaration written in half a page needs to mull over the military conduct of war as unethical for what it reveals the prevalence of lying of the British political leaders. To Sassoon's mind, "the war is being deliberately prolonged by those who have the power to end it" (P. Barker, 1991, p. 5). By accusingly condemning the staff officers to "deliberately" instigate an unjustified war, Sassoon suggests that there is no right intentions behind the war. He widely blames the war office for their insensibility in prolonging the suffering of the fighting men in the trenches, a callous





indifference that nearly flirts with the idea of “bad faith” or “evil and unjust” war (P. Barker, 1991, p. 5). He also portends to reveal in his poetic declaration, the extent to which these unprepared soldiers are ironically being “sacrificed” for the “political errors and insincerities” (P. Barker, 1991, p. 5).

More to the point, Sassoon satirical poem takes all its importance by challenging the moral legitimacy of the war office, questioning, in depth, the collective conscience on the war ethics with implication for life and possible death. To that end, he claims self-determination in opposing the continuance of war in favour of peace and liberty grounded in individual scruples professing that:

I have seen and endured the suffering of the troops, and I can no longer be a party to prolong these sufferings for ends which I believe to be evil and unjust.

I am not protesting against the conduct of the war, but against the political errors and insincerities for which the fighting men are being sacrificed.

On behalf of those who are suffering now I make this protest against the deception which is being practised on them; also I believe that I may help to destroy the callous complacency with which the majority of those at home regard the continuance of agonies which they do not share, and which they have not sufficient imagination to realize (P. Barker, 1991, p. 5).

Sassoon personally takes on his aura of war hero to deconstruct the political narrative of war that unjustly sacrificed the lives of the soldiers. The repetition of the personal pronouns “I” he uses, in these lines, conveys a constrained and detached collective view about the ending the uncanny madness that was the Great War. Using the war poetry as a powerful tool of denunciation, Sassoon attempts to influence the public perception on the true realities of war that he already experienced on the Western front, shattering the illusion that war has nothing to do with the romantic images and heroism that the political leaders use to boggle their minds. The horror of war is, even, metaphorically depicted through the names of the fictional characters “Grave” and “Burns.” Both names heavily connote the brutal and destructive effects of war on individuals’ mind and body. Yet, he tries to demonstrate the futility and the uselessness of war in these terms:

I can’t possibly say “No war is ever justified”, because I haven’t thought about it enough. Perhaps some wars are. Perhaps this one was when it started. I just don’t think our war aims – whatever they may be – and we don’t know – justify this level of slaughter.’ ‘And you say you have thought about your qualifications for saying that?’ ‘Yes. I’m only too well aware of how it sounds. A second-lieutenant, no less, saying “The war must stop”. On the other hand, I have been there. I’m at least as well qualified as some of the old men you see sitting around in clubs, cackling on about “attrition” and “wastage of manpower” and...’ His voice became a vicious parody of an old man’s voice. “Lost heavily in that last scrap. You don’t talk like that if you’ve watched them die’ (P. Barker, 1991, p.15).





Parodying the “collective bloody madness” or “sanguinary imbecility” of the Great War in his poem, to borrow Martin Bidney’s words (M. Bidney, 2006, p. 305), Sassoon firmly envisages to valorise people’s minds about the war atrocities by appealing both the individual and political authorities’ conscience in wartime to prioritize peace over the pursuit of the unnecessary war. The anti-war Declaration poem, then, resonates in the collective minds of the soldiers as the symbol of resilience and wartime austerity, giving voices to the state of dehumanization of the fighters on the frontlines. To Sassoon, the sole sacrifice that is worthy of making is to reconsider the controversial decision of war continuity being shifted from a “war of defence and liberation” to a “war of aggression and conquest” (P. Barker, 1991, p. 5).

In the narrative, the abrupt reaction of the war office, following the declaration, to send him to Craiglockhart War Hospital, a lunatic asylum, and treating him as a “deferred shell-shock” vividly reflects the deep-seated fear and discomfort of the military authorities of being revealed their incompetence in the face of the British society. In this vilification politics, the confinement of the renowned platoon commander being charged with insanity connotes a sound strategy mapped out by this military board to silence and stop him to propagate his war perception. Sassoon’s document of protest may certainly inspire dissent and revolt among the troops or even, lower the morale of the new recruits. Captain Grave even confesses that “Yes. I wrote to the CO, asking him to get Siegfried another Board. He’d already skipped one. Then I contacted various people I know and managed to persuade them to treat it as a nervous breakdown. That left Siegfried. I knew it was no use writing” (P. Barker, 1991, p. 23). Grave’s full confession, in this passage, comes once more to uncover the lack of ethical code in the conduct of war. Pat Barker, in her fiction, by obviously exposing the web of intrigue behind the scenes, contends to invite the readers to a deeper reflection on the ethical responsibility of the actors engaged in the wartime. Definitively, Barker, through Siegfried Sassoon’s Declaration criticizes and condemns the unnecessary continuity of war by the military authorities in World War I and pleads for the reasonable choice of moral judgements for the use of warlike forces. Yet, how does the unjust war affects the mental of the soldiers? And how is trauma narrated?

## 2. Narrating War Neurosis

Pat Barker’s war narrative expressively enters into the storytelling tradition of the interpersonal experiences of war trauma. In the process of reconstitution and reformation of the silenced history of shell-shocked British soldiers plagued with hysterical and neurasthenic disorders, the overlapping of literature and clinical diagnosis of patients’ psychosis is paramount. As to Rita Charon et al, “literary accounts about medicine, then, contribute a needed





ingredient to medical education and training: they give rich and accurate “case” histories of the physicians life that can stimulate important personal introspection about and examination of all that the physician is called to do” (Rita et al, 1995, p. 601). Cathy Caruth reiterates Freud’s thought, pointing out that “. If Freud turns to literature to describe traumatic experience, it is because literature, like psychoanalysis, is interested in the complex relation between knowing and not knowing. And it is, indeed at the specific point at which knowing and not knowing intersect that the language of literature and the psychoanalytic theory of traumatic experience precisely meet” (C. Caruth, 1996, p. 3).

Central to the themes of hauntology and trauma narrative, Barker’s *The Regeneration Trilogy* focuses on physician-patients therapeutical alliance to probe the latent content of the shell-shocked which is fraught with recurring nightmares and hallucinations. Freud would speak of “inescapable nature of this repetitiveness” or “compulsion neuroses” which makes the sufferer therefrom *aware* that he is “compelled by something” to make this or that gesture or this or that turn or else he feels uncomfortable, uneasy, at times plainly anxious (S. Freud, 1961, p. xiv).

In probing their haunting memories, the army psychiatrist of Craiglockhart War Hospital, W.H.R.Rivers bets on a certainty narrative discourse of trauma to better comprehend patients’ stories of war neurosis, interpret and provide accurate diagnoses to patients. On the various medical appointment he had with patients, either in the office or at their bedsides, Rivers advocates, in his psychotherapeutic treatment method, the remembrance of the painful events and “to let themselves feel the pity and terror their war experience inevitably evoked (P. Barker, 1991, p. 50). By acknowledging these repressed emotions, patients may certainly learn to easily voice the silenced traumatized histories.

The narrative surrounding Second Lieutenant Prior’s selective mutism and acute asthma serves as a sound illustration to the complexities in treating trauma treatment without the patients’ close implication of voicing the unspeakable experience of war. Prior’s inability to verbalize the content of the nightmarish dream he has and which impedes his room-mate to sleep proves as a major obstacle in the path of regenerating war neurosis. That certainly explains the reason why Dr Rivers foretells him that “it’s rather more serious than that. It doesn’t show up soon, we’re going to have to try to get a history together – like this and that’s not going to be easy...why do we have to do it? Because I need to know what’s happened to you (P. Barker, 1991, p. 44). In that cognitive processing of therapy, the dream symbolizes a crucial psychological device that can enable him to get access to his suppressed memories. In voicing





the horrible memories that haunt his dream, the underlying latent content of the patients' dream might suddenly resurface to reduce the stress or the nightmare.

The unwitting re-enactment of Prior's voice he painfully and suddenly recovers in the middle of the night openly gives Dr Rivers a free hand to psychoanalyse him. By psychoanalyzing his patient, Dr Rivers conclusively determines that Prior's loss of memory and breakdown fraught with nightmare is closely provoked by his guilty sense of responsibility he had in the killing of his men under his command in the dugout. Through Prior, Barker vividly unearths to readers the height of power that voicing the silenced memories exercises in the recovery of trauma from horrifying experience of war which remains buried in the mind of the victim.

Meanwhile, Captain Ralph Anderson's case story of haemophobia, fraught with nightmare and vomiting at the sight of blood, also displays the utility of storytelling in the curing of mental breakdown. In telling his fairly emasculating experience through a determined casual tone to Dr Rivers, in which he was being brutally cornered with a big stick turning into a snake, tied up with a pair of Lady's corsets and later shut up in a very dark grave wearing a post-mortem apron and glove, Captain Anderson was totally opened to get a plausible interpretation of his dream, even if he already has a basic knowledge of Freud's therapy concept as a top surgeon. Dr Rivers' subjective interpretation of Anderson's most frightened thing, the snake, in the dream augurs Anderson's Oedipal opposition to his father-in-law. Anderson's oedipal narration of trauma reveals a latency of his fear in losing control in practicing medicine anew as a military surgeon, which unluckily caused the bleeding to death of French soldier. The post-mortem apron of Dr Rivers' psychological construction expresses "no more than a lack of faith in him, or, more accurately, in his methods, since obviously any doctor who spends much time so attired is not meeting with uniform success on the wards (P. Barker, 1991, p. 33). It also discloses Anderson's repressed memories of horror "he'd witnessed in France, then perhaps he was desperate enough to have considered suicide? That might account both for the post-mortem apron and for the extreme terror he'd felt on waking (P. Barker, 1991, p. 33-34).

### **3. Reprogramming the Mind: A dialectical Approach to Trauma**

Pat Barker's *The Regeneration Trilogy* extensively explores the themes of trauma and its therapeutic approaches. Her novel offers a broader perspective on the methods of treatment whose formal application seems to be either contradictory or complementary. As a matter of fact, Barker's novel puts forward, in contrast to Rivers' talking therapy fostering a





conversational approach to process patients' suppressed memories through Dr Lewis Yealland's electroconvulsive Therapy.

While Rivers' talking therapy obviously focuses on a patient-centred approach, Dr Yealland's method of treatment was relatively unconventional. It totally excludes any closeness with patients being treated for mental breakdown. The bulk of conversation was only limited between Yealland and the two junior doctors, "no questions were asked about their psychological state. Many of them, Rivers thought, showed signs of depression, but in every case the removal of the physical symptom was described as a cure. Most of these patients would be out within a week, Yealland said. Rivers asked questions about the relapse rate, the suicide rate, and received the expected reply. Nobody knew" (P. Barker, 1991, p. 24). Dr Yealland's experimental treatment he meted out to the great majority of his patients by means of electrode shocks from "the sixth dorsal spine down to the lumber region" (P. Barker, 1991, p. 215) closely reflects a dehumanizing method of treatment in which he brutally tortures his patients to treat their mental breakdown. Dr Yealland's therapeutical approach emphasizes the denial of humanity and coercive therapy crowned by a lack of interest in the patients as exemplified through Callan's demonstrative treatment. By forcing him to progressively repeat the sounds of the alphabets, vowel sounds and then words and sentences "S-ss-Sunday", "M-mm-Monday", "T-tt-Tuesday", Dr Yealland's therapy effectively aims to deny his personal identity, reducing him to a toll of war. Meanwhile, Callan's indifference to the therapy epitomizes the strong desire to resist the health system of the war office.

In contrast to Dr Yealland's cruel and oppressive method of treatment, Rivers' patient-centred approach deeply recommended creative and occupational activities such as the watching of Charlie Chaplin film, or even, the playing of tennis games and piano as part of their psychological and physical well-beings. To build and preserve the therapeutic alliance, Rivers routinely bets on the screening of Charlie Chaplin's funny movies as an alternative treatment to help shell-shocked soldiers decrease their stress hormones and release the past experience they underwent in wartime. Focusing on Charlie Chaplin's idyllic scenarios as a non-pharmacological treatment, the movie infuses in traumatized soldiers' mind mildly decrease dysphoric moods and stressful physiological responses, letting their minds drift from unpleasant experiences of war through humour and laughing sensations. Laughter therapy, according to Jong Eun Yim, "physiologically reduces the level of stress hormones, increases the level of health promoting-hormones such as endorphins, and strengthens the immune system by increasing the number of T-lymphocytes through activation of natural killer cells, which multiplies white blood cells in the body, and Ig A, G, and M, which raises immunity in the





body” (J. Eun Yim, 2016, p. 243). The endorphins secreted by the emotion of the screening of Charlie Chaplin’s films elevates the mood of the soldiers and help them to enhance memories and interpersonal interactions.

Such a post-dinner activity takes place in the same space, the patients’ common room and undoubtedly reflects a psychotherapeutic outlet meant to reinforce mutual connection and camaraderie amid soldiers. This shared experience, for instance, fosters empathetic connection from which the soldier Broadbent benefits unflagging moral support when he came back to his mother’s funeral. “For some days after that Broadbent sat around the patients’ common room, pink-eyed and sorrowful, being consoled by the VADs. This happy state of affairs came to a close when Mrs Broadbent arrived, demanding to know why she never heard from her son (P. Barker, 1991, p. 136). The same can be said for the anonymous young boy “who’s broken down after finding the mutilated body of his friend, had become dramatically better in the last few weeks (P. Barker, 1991, p. 137).

In tandem with occupational therapy, Rivers also focuses on shell-shocked soldiers’ writing poetry as a creative activity in the shaping of the healing process of war neurosis and trauma. Even though, he knows little about poetry, he readily recognizes the increasing power that such a cognitive activity holds on his patients. Of all Craiglockhart’s shell-shocked pensioners in Edinburgh being treated for mental breakdown, in the full pages of Barker’s novel, only the two officers-poets, Siegfried Sassoon and Wilfred Owen, emerge as the patients safe from insanity. In opposition to ordinary traumatized patients who channel a great deal of energy in forgetting and suppressing traumatized events of war from memories, Sassoon, on the other hand, draws upon these repressed experiences, by recollecting the memories of war atrocities to write his poem. To River’s mind,

Sassoon’s determination to remember might well account for his early and rapid recovery, though in his case it was motivated less by a desire to save his own sanity than by a determination to convince civilians that the war was mad. Writing the poems had obviously been therapeutic, but then Rivers suspected that writing the Declaration might have been therapeutic too. He thought that Sassoon’s poetry and his protest sprang from a single source, and each could be linked to his recovery from that terrible period of nightmares and hallucinations. If that was true, then persuading Sassoon to give in and go back would be a much more complicated and risky business than he had thought, and might well precipitate a relapse. He sighed and put the poems back in the envelope (P. Barker, 1991, p. 29).

By writing the poetic declaration, Sassoon engages in a form of poetic catharsis in which he attempts to purge both personal and collective emotion of the futility of war. Even if Sassoonian poetic declaration seems to be relatively more conscious and bitter in tone directed to both the non-soldiers others-unwitting civilians and military authorities, his poem





psychologically appeals to raise-awareness on the idea that the real enemy is not the Germans, but rather the senseless killing of the soldiers in the trenches. Sassoon's ability to remember past war experiences is beneficial not only for him, but also for the readers likely to intuitively decry any psychological growth through his poetry. For Esther Sánchez-Pardo González,

the artwork becomes a transformational space which brings both artist and reader into closer contact with a traumatic experience, allowing the opportunity for working it through. For the war poets, writing to an audience allows them to create that witness. There are limits, however, to the therapeutic potential of such art. In such an artwork, the reader is placed into the position of witness, a position which the reader may or may not accept. Rejecting the place of the witness would transform again the artwork into the re-enactment of the original trauma (S. Pardo González, 2012, p.184).

The act of writing poetry allows him to confront his emotions particularly his frustration at the war futility and processing the "terrible period of nightmare and hallucinations" (P. Barker, 1991, p. 29) he suffered from. "And yet he was writing, and he seemed to think he was writing well. All the anger and grief now went into the poetry. He'd given up hope of influencing events. Or perhaps he'd just given up hope" (P. Barker, 1991, p. 211). Through the sublimation of the traumatic events, Sassoon, in his trenches poems, sought to convey, as strongly as he can, his anger and grief.

Condescendingly to Sassoon's provocative poetry in tone, Owen's poetry resonates through romantic influence of war as an appeal to psychological healing and growth in confronting war trauma. Owen's poem "what a passing bell," he brilliantly writes under the mentorship of Sassoon releases shell-shocked soldiers emotions in their healing process. He subconsciously conveys through the psychology behind the creative activity, the feeling and emotions that appeal to the reconnection of soldiers to the nature and humanity. Opening his poem by a rhetorical question, "what passing- bell for these who die as cattle?" (P. Barker, 1991, p. 139), Owen seeks to shock and provoke readers' sensibility in raising their consciousness on the sort of pretentious funeral they will receive when they will die for the nations.

Drawing upon poetry as a cognitive therapy, the first-ranks poets, Sassoon and Owen, also relies on Brock's concept of "Ergotherapy" or "cure by functioning" to emphasize the need for shell-shocked soldiers to "rediscover their links with an environment from which they had become detached. They could only do this through active and useful functioning; through working" (Thomas E F Webb, 2006, p. 343). Paraphrasing Mykhailo's definition, "Ergotherapy" is a clinical method of treatment and rehabilitation that aims to restore the physical activity of people with disabilities (Mykhailo et al, 2021, p. 2016). The imageries of the Greek legend of "Antaeus" and "Hercules" he allegorically uses in the narrative to





underscore the visceral impact of war on the soldiers. The soldiers, from Sassoon's poetical perspective, symbolically represent "Antaeus" in the sense that "we've been ungrounded by the war. And the way back to health is to re-establish the link between oneself and the earth, but understanding "earth" to mean society as well as nature. That's why we do surveys and things like that' (Pat Barker, 1991, p. 121). Sassoon's poetic catharsis also resonates through the collective conscious and unconscious as an instrument for emotional release, forging the re-connection with humanity or normal life. According to Louis Hoffman:

Poetry grips many layers of human experience. It stimulates both the conscious and unconscious mind. It encompasses the rational as well as the irrational. It stimulates thought as well as emotion. Poetry is able to hold together and unite the paradoxical nature of human existence. Additionally, poetry is relation in its essence. It draws the poet and the reader toward other people, humanity, nature and spiritual world. This nature of poetry brings great potential for deepening the therapy and relational process. Stated differently, poetry brings with it opportunities for healing, understanding and engaging the whole being in the therapy process, both in the existential-humanistic and transpersonal models of psychotherapy (L. Hoffman, 2014, p. 213).

By sharing the poems in *The Hydra*, the hospital magazine engaged in the cure by writing, Rivers obviously portends to elicit shell-shocked soldiers' emotions and feelings in processing trauma. It provides them a fascinating window into war veterans' experiences as well as the hospital's ethos and activities. And, within the pages of *The Hydra* are "a series of fascinating and revealing cartoons depicting, among other things, the traumatic nightmares most of those at the hydro suffered, Rivers' mystical reputation, and the often mixed feelings of soldiers on leaving the place. Poems and short stories written by patients and nurses allow us to gain an idea of the reaction of the local inhabitants to the blue-armed patients (Thomas E F Webb, 2006, p. 345). In this therapeutic context, Barker's narrative analogically displays the empathetic connectivity between art and medicine.

## Conclusion

In definitive, Barker's narrative universe preys on the readers' minds to keep thinking about the over explored history of World War I in literature opposing distinct societies. Realistically, her novel appeals to a collective retrospection, particularly decision-makers and the soldiers, to place responsibility on the justification of that dirty war. Barker relies on the real-life characters like Siegfried Sassoon, Wilfred Owen and Dr Rivers to depict the true reality of war and its psychological impact that continues to haunt the survivors and their relatives. These traumatized victims symbolically reflect the repressed aspect of the British wartime history. As a result, the narration of the silenced history of trauma stands as a sound therapeutic





alliance in understanding and reprogramming the minds of the shell-shocked British soldiers. In accordance with Freudian's dream work therapy, in the narrative, Barker successfully summons a panoply of therapeutic devices that seemingly contradicted or combined in the treatment of the patients suffering from war neurosis and mental breakdown. The contradictory approach of Dr Yealland's mechanic treatment and Dr Rivers' talk therapy come to underscore the need of empathy in the healing process.

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